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S/1998/699
30 July 1998
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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH, FRENCH AND RUSSIAN

France, Germany, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 1150 (1998) of 30 January 1998, recalling the statement of its President of 28 May 1998 (S/PRST/1998/16) and recalling also the letter of its President to the Secretary-General of 10 July 1998 (S/1998/633),

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 14 July 1998 (S/1998/647 and Add.1),

Deeply concerned at the continuing tense and confrontational situation in the Zugdidi and Gali regions and at the risk of resumed fighting,

Deeply concerned also at the unwillingness on the part of both sides to renounce violence and seriously consider peaceful options for the resolution of the conflict,

Supporting the vigorous efforts made by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative with the assistance of the Russian Federation in its capacity as facilitator as well as of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to prevent the resumption of hostilities and to give a new impetus to the negotiations within the United Nations-led peace process, and welcoming in this context the adoption by the parties of a Concluding Statement of the meeting held in Geneva on 23-25 July 1998 and the accompanying statement of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General (S/1998/647/Add.1),

Reaffirming the necessity for the parties strictly to respect human rights, expressing its support for the efforts of the Secretary-General to find ways to improve their observance as an integral part of the work towards a comprehensive political settlement, and noting developments in the work of the United Nations Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia,

Welcoming the role of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS peacekeeping force) as stabilizing factors in the zone of conflict, noting that the cooperation between UNOMIG and the CIS peacekeeping force is good, and stressing the importance of continued close cooperation and coordination between them in the performance of their respective mandates,

1. Welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 14 July 1998;

2. Reiterates its grave concern at the resumption of hostilities which took place in May 1998 and calls upon the parties to observe strictly the Moscow Agreement of 14 May 1994 on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces (S/1994/583, annex I) (the Moscow Agreement) and also the ceasefire protocol signed on 25 May 1998, as well as all their obligations to refrain from the use of force and to resolve disputed issues by peaceful means only;

3. Expresses its deep concern at the significant outflow of refugees resulting from the recent hostilities, reaffirms the right of all refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in secure conditions in accordance with international law and as set out in the Quadripartite Agreement of 4 April 1994 on the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons (S/1994/397, annex II), calls upon both sides to fulfil their obligations in this regard, and demands in particular that the Abkhaz side allow the unconditional and immediate return of all persons displaced since the resumption of hostilities in May 1998;

4. Condemns the deliberate destruction of houses by Abkhaz forces, with the apparent motive of expelling people from their home areas;

5. Recalls the conclusions of the Lisbon summit of the OSCE (S/1997/57, annex) regarding the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, and reaffirms the unacceptability of the demographic changes resulting from the conflict;

6. Expresses its deep concern at the extremely difficult humanitarian situation of the displaced persons from the Gali region as well as of those who remained in that area, and at the serious negative impact recent developments have had on international humanitarian efforts in the Gali region;

7. Reiterates that the primary responsibility for achieving peace rests upon the parties themselves and reminds them that the continued commitment of the international community to assist them depends on their progress in this regard;

8. Calls upon the parties to display without delay the necessary political will to achieve substantial results on the key issues of the negotiations, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, within the framework of the United Nations-led peace process and through direct dialogue, and to cooperate fully with the efforts made by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, with the assistance of the Russian Federation as facilitator, as well as of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General and of the OSCE;

9. Welcomes the meeting of the parties held in Geneva on 23-25 July 1998 and calls upon them to continue and increase their active engagement in this process initiated by the Secretary-General aimed at achieving a comprehensive political settlement;

10. Reminds the parties of their commitments to take all measures in their power and to coordinate their efforts to ensure the security and safety of international personnel and calls upon them to implement fully and without delay those commitments, including the creation of a joint mechanism for investigation and prevention of acts that represent violations of the Moscow Agreement and terrorist acts in the zone of conflict;

11. Condemns the acts of violence against the personnel of UNOMIG, the renewed laying of mines in the Gali region and also the attacks by armed groups, operating in the Gali region from the Georgian side of the Inguri River, against the CIS peacekeeping force and demands that the parties, in particular the Georgian authorities, take determined measures to put a stop to such acts which subvert the peace process;

12. Reiterates its deep concern regarding the security of UNOMIG, welcomes the measures already taken to improve security conditions to minimize the danger to UNOMIG personnel and to create conditions for the implementation of its mandated tasks, underlines the need to continue to make further arrangements in this field, welcomes also the Secretary-General's instruction that the security of UNOMIG be kept under constant review and calls upon the two parties to facilitate the implementation of practical measures resulting from that review;

13. Expresses its concern at the mass media campaign launched in Abkhazia, Georgia, and the acts of harassment against UNOMIG, and calls upon the Abkhaz side to cease those acts;

14. Decides to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 31 January 1999 subject to a review by the Council of the mandate of UNOMIG in the event of any changes that may be made in the mandate or in the presence of the CIS peacekeeping force;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to keep the Council regularly informed, to report three months after the date of the adoption of this resolution on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, including on the operations of UNOMIG, and expresses its intention to conduct a review of the Mission in the light of the report of the Secretary-General, taking into account in particular the progress made by the two parties in creating secure conditions in which UNOMIG can fulfil its existing mandate and establishing a political settlement;

16. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

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LETTER DATED 27 JULY 1998 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN AND OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a joint Russian-Iranian statement regarding the peace process in Tajikistan, signed at Tehran on 19 July 1998 during the talks between Mr. B. N. Pastukhov, first Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Mr. M. Sarmadi, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sergey LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

(Signed) Mehdi DANESH-YAZDI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: Russian]

Joint Russian-Iranian statement regarding the peace process in Tajikistan

In the course of two rounds of talks on 18 and 19 July 1998 between Mr. Boris Pastukhov, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Mr. Morteza Sarmadi, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as in a meeting between Mr. Pastukhov and Mr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the situation in Tajikistan and the process of the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, signed in Moscow with the active participation of the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran, were considered in detail.

The parties noted that, although the peace process had acquired a certain degree of stability, the situation in Tajikistan remained precarious. They noted with concern that the implementation of a number of the basic agreements, including some in the political and military fields, lagged behind the timetable envisaged in the General Agreement.

The Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran called on the parties to the conflict to intensify their efforts to implement the General Agreement which is leading the people of Tajikistan to a lasting and just peace, and stressed that both sides should refrain from any actions contrary to the provisions of the General Agreement. This process can move forward successfully only on condition of mutual respect and trust and the complete and timely fulfilment of the obligations assumed by the parties during the inter-Tajik talks.

The Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue their endeavours to help Tajikistan in the strengthening of stability, economic reconstruction and the resolution of all urgent problems related to the consolidation of the independence of that country.

The Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran, while fulfilling their responsibilities under the Protocol on guarantees for the implementation of the General Agreement, and reiterating their objective and impartial position vis-à-vis the Tajik parties, call on third States not to permit interference in the internal affairs of Tajikistan.

The Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran highly appreciate the contribution made by the United Nations to the settlement of the inter-Tajik conflict and support the idea of convening a meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the guarantor States of the General Agreement.

The Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran believe that there is no reasonable alternative to the full and timely implementation of the Tajikistan peace accords and invite all countries in the region that are

interested in the consolidation of peace and stability on Tajik soil to join forces.

(Signed) Boris PASTUKHOV
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Russian Federation

(Signed) Morteza SARMADI
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Tehran, 19 July 1998

UNITED NATIONS **S**

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LETTER DATED 29 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the joint statement of 28 July 1998 by Mr. Emomali Sharipovich Rakhmanov, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, and Mr. Said Abdullo Nuri, Chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Tajikistan to
the United Nations

Annex

Joint statement by Mr. Emomali Sharipovich Rakhmanov, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, and Mr. Said Abdullo Nuri, Chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission

The signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan and the constructive work of the National Reconciliation Commission in implementing the provisions of that historic document were the result of intensive joint efforts by the leadership of the Republic of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO).

The practical results achieved in the course of laying the foundations for a peaceful life were greeted with approval by all the inhabitants of the Republic and by all States and international organizations that desire peace for our people. All the efforts of the Tajik people are today directed to ensuring stability, and eliminating the consequences of military and political confrontation and mistrust; that is of itself a factor conducive to the renewal of the country's economy. The work performed so far by the Government and the National Reconciliation Commission is convincing proof that Tajikistan is confidently advancing along the path of peace and that no power is capable of reversing that process, for such is the choice of the people themselves.

Today, we can state as follows:

The National Reconciliation Commission is at work in Dushanbe and practically the entire leadership of the opposition forces has returned to the Homeland, and is living and working in the country's capital.

Representatives of the UTO have been appointed to a number of posts in the Government. Agreement has been reached in principle on the inclusion of its other representatives, on the basis of a 30 per cent quota, in the membership of the leadership and executive bodies.

A start has been made on swearing in the armed formations of the UTO and their reintegration in the structures of the government forces, which now number over 600 men. As the first stage in the reintegration, the military formations of the UTO have been formed into a battalion within the system of the Republic's Ministry of Defence. A joint subdivision has been formed consisting of military servicemen of the Ministry of Defence and the UTO numbering 220 men in order to ensure the safety of the international staff. Over 150 officers and men of the UTO have come back from the Islamic State of Afghanistan to their permanent places of deployment, and the remainder, who are currently in the territory of that country, will soon arrive.

The majority of those who participated in the military and political opposition have been granted amnesty and have been released from their places of confinement, and all prisoners of war have been released. In addition, the President of the country has sent to the Majlis-i Oli (Parliament) of Tajikistan a draft parliamentary resolution on a general amnesty which will cover the remainder of the participants in the conflict.

The refugees from the Islamic State of Afghanistan have all been repatriated and the process of repatriating refugees to the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States is under way.

In the interest of peace and national accord, the President of the country has imposed a veto on the Political Parties Act of the Republic of Tajikistan which was adopted by the Majlis-i Oli and which prohibits the creation of parties on a religious basis. It has been sent to the Parliament for revision.

The subcommissions of the National Reconciliation Commission are intensively engaged in preparing a series of proposed amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan.

A number of other measures have already been put into effect, but we acknowledge that the process of putting into effect all the provisions of the General Agreement is progressing slowly and we intend to do everything we can to expedite the implementation of the understandings reached.

However, it is no secret that enemies of the Tajik people and traitors are continuing to nurture insidious plans and will stop at nothing and use the most subtle devices to bring them to fulfilment. The people of the Republic were profoundly shaken by news of the tragic death of staff members of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan. We have no doubt that behind this terrorist act there is a clearly expressed political agenda. Those who carried out this infamous act were bent on undermining the peace process and the progress being made in implementing the programme of the post-conflict renewal of the economy of the country, and on impairing the political authority of the Republic of Tajikistan in the eyes of the world community.

An intensive investigation of the murder of the UNMOT staff is now under way. A fully qualified commission, the membership of which includes representatives of the Government, the National Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Mission of Observers, has been established. Three specially formed investigating groups are working on a number of scenarios. According to the law enforcement agencies, a great deal of information has been compiled, which gives grounds for expecting that the crime committed will soon be solved.

The Government of the country and the leadership of the United Tajik Opposition are determined to find the murderers and punish them with the full rigour of the laws of the Republic of Tajikistan. We have every reason to expect that the murderers will not escape just retribution.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the leadership of the United Tajik Opposition can, in all sincerity, assure the diplomatic and international missions accredited to Tajikistan that the Republic has sufficient forces to ensure their safety and the normal progress of their work in our country.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the leadership of the United Tajik Opposition state that the country has done, and continues to do, everything possible to ensure the successful completion of the process of establishing lasting peace and stability on Tajik soil, so as to direct all

efforts towards the accelerated implementation of the programmes for rebuilding the economy on market principles and ensuring stable development. In those conditions, the Republic of Tajikistan needs, as never before, the help and support of the world community not only in the political field but also in the economic field: that will enable the country more quickly to heal its wounds and bring about socio-economic and political transformations.

(Signed) Emomali RAKHMONOV
President of the Republic
of Tajikistan

(Signed) Said Abdullo NURI
Chairman of the National
Reconciliation Commission

Dushanbe, 28 July 1998

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29 July 1998
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LETTER DATED 29 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to notify you of continued violations of the ceasefire resolution and the Tehran agreement concerning the area of separation between Iraq and Iran that were committed by the Iranian side between 28 February and 17 July 1998, as shown in the list annexed hereto.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Permanent Representative

98-22198 (E) 040898 040898

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Annex

Iranian violations of the ceasefire and the 1991 Tehran agreement, 28 February-17 July 1998

1. 28 February 1998

The boats bearing the Basrah registration numbers 1749, 1750 and 1754, all three belonging to Mr. Imad Ghalib Hasan, foundered in Iraqi territorial waters in the Faw sector of the Shatt al-Arab as a result of a storm. The boats were seized on the opposite shore by the Iranian authorities.

2. 4 May 1998

At 1900 hours the Iranian side deployed three different-coloured fibreglass patrol boats (one red, one grey and one white) in the Shatt al-Arab between Abadan, at coordinates 410555, and the Mutawwa'ah area, at coordinates 2988660 (1:100,000 map of Saybah). A fourth, black, boat was also seen moving along the boats deployed in fixed positions. Each boat carried three persons, and some of them were in military uniform. At 0640 hours on 5 May all of the boats withdrew from the area.

3. 10 May 1998

At 0830 hours an Iranian engineering unit proceeded to make a dirt road along the Iranian shore at coordinates 6018 (1:100,000 map of Mina' al-Bakr), using one excavator and three dump trucks.

4. 10 May 1998

At 1130 hours a group of some 30 Iranian civilians, men and women, was seen with a number of vehicles coming from a point inside Iranian territory at coordinates 598176 (1:100,000 map of Mina' al-Bakr). They visited the pier bridge, and at 1300 hours they left the area heading towards the Iranian rear.

5. 20 May 1998

At 0900 hours an engineering unit consisting of five persons with a water pump and a welding machine was seen at the port of Muhammarah engaged in refloating one of the sunken pontoons at the anchorage at coordinates 2770 (1:100,000 map of Saybah). At the same time, an Iranian engineering unit at the same location was seen dredging and clearing the area opposite the Muhammarah anchorage. The equipment used included a tug to tow the pontoon, six Poclain backhoes and two excavators, and there were seven labourers.

6. 23 May 1998

At 1445 hours three different-coloured vehicles were seen, one Scammell forklift and two Scania trucks, carrying parts for a 16-metre-high metal tower that was erected opposite our units at coordinates 5051 near the Iranian Fakkah

post. At 1757 hours on the same day these vehicles returned to the Iranian rear.

7. 30 May 1998

The Iranians erected a number of towers 8 to 10 metres high in areas opposite our border posts for use as observation posts and in monitoring Iraqi territory, as follows:

(a) One tower opposite the Arafat post at the trading area;

(b) One tower opposite the Ta'an post and another to the right of the post;

(c) Three towers opposite the Darraji post.

8. 2 June 1998

An Iranian engineering unit consisting of one excavator and a number of dump trucks was seen carrying out modifications in the area opposite Faw at coordinates 370217 (1:100,000 map of Faw).

9. 5 June 1998

An Iranian patrol boat fired on an Iraqi fishing boat operating in the Shatt al-Arab in the Faw area. The boat was taken away, together with its crew of two fishermen, namely Muhannad Abd al-Razzaq Sa'id and Hasan Sa'id. The fishermen Adil Luaybi Zamil and Adi Yusuf Dawud were also abducted while they were at work in the same locality on a small boat with no motor. At 0400 hours on 15 June all four fishermen were released.

10. 15 June 1998

The Iranians erected three metal towers 16 to 18 metres in height, for purposes of observation, at coordinates 550504, 570455 and 5744104 (1:100,000 map of Shaykh Faris) opposite the Iraqi Fakkah area. Each tower is manned by six to eight persons.

11. 21 June 1998

The Iranian side erected a metal tower 16 to 18 metres in height to the left of the Urshaydah post at coordinates 605365. The number of persons in the tower is estimated at six to eight.

12. 25 June 1998

Between 1800 and 2000 hours the Iranian side burnt the reeds behind the earth embankment opposite the Badikhiyah area in the Shatt al-Arab at coordinates 518410.

13. 28 June 1998

At 0830 hours, as he was going from the Sayhah post at coordinates 9662 to the Arafat post at coordinates 9765, PFC Tha'ir Mahmud Jasim was ambushed by six armed Iranians at coordinates 9763. He was taken to the Iranian post at coordinates 9761 and was released two hours later.

14. 8 July 1998

At 1100 hours an engineering unit consisting of a pontoon carrying four or five persons with a hoist and a salvage pump was seen opposite the Shahiniyah area at coordinates 299678 (1:100,000 map of Saybah) retrieving submerged objects. A sunken vessel was brought up and taken under tow by a tug to the Karun River.

15. 17 July 1998

At 1700 hours the Iranians opened a border observation post at coordinates 291679 (1:100,000 map of Saybah).

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LETTER DATED 30 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the attached statement issued on 30 July 1998 by the joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council in Iraq and the Iraqi Regional Command of the Arab Baath Socialist Party concerning Iraq's compliance with its obligations under section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), stating that the Council must carry out its responsibilities and adopt a resolution lifting the blockade on Iraq, beginning with the implementation of paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

His Excellency President Saddam Hussein has presided over a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council and the Iraqi Regional Command of the Arab Baath Socialist Party. The meeting discussed the latest developments in the relationship with the Special Commission, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Security Council in the light of the letter issued by the joint meeting of 1 May 1998, the speech of His Excellency Saddam Hussein on 17 July 1998, and the further meeting held on 21 July 1998 and the statement issued by it. The meeting discussed in particular the deliberations that are currently under way in the Security Council concerning the nuclear file, the arbitrary and aggressive position of the United States of America and the failure of the Security Council to adopt a fair and equitable resolution on this matter. The joint meeting issued the following statement:

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

The manner in which the nuclear file has been dealt with, whereby the United States rejects some of the ideas being discussed at the present time in the Security Council, namely that the Council should, by means of a resolution, move on from the disarmament phase to the monitoring phase, is a blatant example of the arbitrary way in which Iraq's legitimate cause has been handled.

All the IAEA reports, apart from a few details, have shown for years that the Agency's tasks under section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) have been completed and that, in fact, it only carries out monitoring and verification activities. However, the Security Council, under United States influence, is not willing to adopt a resolution affirming these facts by moving on to the monitoring phase.

Furthermore, the Special Commission has been working on behalf of the United States scheme by deliberately prolonging its assignment and consequently keeping the embargo in place.

The Special Commission is well aware that all the disarmament requirements as contained in section C of resolution 687 (1991) in the three files (missiles, chemical and biological) were fully met several years ago. Weapons, hundreds of factories, pieces of apparatus and equipment which the Special Commission claimed were connected with weapons production have been destroyed. The destruction was carried out in a vindictive manner and even included normal equipment and apparatus at those factories, such as air-conditioners, lighting equipment, furniture and other items which had no connection with weapons or weapons production. Meanwhile, Iraq has been suffering from a comprehensive and unjust embargo and needs every item of its national property.

Since 1994, a comprehensive, rigorous and intrusive monitoring system has been in place, covering hundreds of factories, installations, universities, schools and other sites. Several teams inspect and strictly monitor all these sites on a daily basis. They meddle in all their affairs (such as the budget of the site, the number of its staff, and the number of people holding postgraduate

degrees) and commit other intrusive acts which are, in fact, nothing but intelligence activity, the findings of which go to the intelligence services in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and especially the Zionist entity.

In addition to the heavy losses suffered by Iraq amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars as a result of the destruction of hundreds of factories, pieces of apparatus and items of equipment, which, for the most part, can be used for civilian purposes and which have already been largely converted to civilian operation, the activities of IAEA and the Special Commission have, since 1991, cost Iraq huge sums of money and have necessitated great efforts to which a significant number of high-level officials, hundreds of engineers, technicians, professors, specialists, and hundreds of other people who provide support for the duties of IAEA and the Special Commission, apply themselves and in which they participate to the detriment of their normal tasks and duties. Iraq is required to provide everything needed for the inspections conducted by IAEA and the Special Commission, and for all the daily monitoring operations, and is required to service and refuel the Special Commission's aircraft, to accompany the inspection and monitoring teams and provide protection for them. It is also required to interrupt the activities of all the factories, installations, universities, research centres, and even civilian sites such as infant's milk factories, mills, hospitals, agricultural and veterinary services, food-processing companies and water-purification schemes in order to respond to the demands of IAEA and the Special Commission.

This situation has continued for over seven years. Iraq has agreed to meet all these excessive and burdensome demands for the sake of one key objective, namely the lifting of the unjust embargo.

For seven years the United States, together with the United Kingdom and other followers of the United States, has opposed any step whatsoever to lift or alleviate the embargo.

The legitimate question which must be put to the Security Council and to the international community is: why should Iraq bear all these losses, and all these burdens, and these excessive and burdensome expenses? Why should it submit all its factories, installations, universities, and so forth, to inspection and monitoring, with all the espionage openly carried out by elements of the Special Commission for the benefit of the United States of America, with its aggressive and imperialist designs against Iraq, that that implies? Why should Iraq bear all this while the embargo remains in place, whatever Iraq does to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council?

For seven years, Iraq has been promised by one party or another that its patience, endurance and cooperation with IAEA and the Special Commission will lead to the lifting of the embargo. In order to relieve the sufferings of its people and alleviate their distress, the leadership has tolerated the conduct of the Special Commission, its endless demands and its impudent spying methods.

We had been hoping that the conscience of members of the Security Council would be stirred and that they would consider this situation in an even-handed and impartial manner. However, the years passed and even-handedness and

impartiality were to be found only in a few members of the Security Council whose position did not go beyond complaining about and expressing dissatisfaction with the situation. That did not result in effective action or prompt the Security Council to adopt the resolution, which has been awaited for seven years, to end the embargo on Iraq, initially by implementing paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991) and then by fully and comprehensively rescinding the other prohibitions which have been imposed on Iraq and which are entirely without precedent anywhere in the world.

As a result of the way in which the nuclear file has been dealt with, as we have already mentioned, and of the manoeuvres of the Special Commission in raising marginal issues which do not affect the essential fact that all the major practical requirements of disarmament in accordance with the text and logic of resolution 687 (1991) have been fulfilled, the expectations as to the possible closure of the files before October 1998 and the implementation, at the same time, of paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991) have been dashed. The prospect we are now facing is that the situation will continue, that the embargo will continue for an unknown and unspecified period, and that the Special Commission will continue to destroy and squander the property of the nation and to divert the State from its task of serving the people.

In announcing these facts, we put a strong, stark and severe question to the Security Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the entire international community: why should Iraq continue to tolerate this while the embargo still remains in place and it is not known when it will be lifted?

The experience of the "presidential sites" was a blatant and, for anyone who is capable of being ashamed, a shameful example of this unjust situation. The Special Commission, with the United States behind it, asked to enter the presidential sites, which are the supreme headquarters of the State and have a high status for the people as symbols of sovereignty and dignity, in addition to their significance for the security of the leadership and the State. The Americans, along with the British, have spread fanciful lies about the existence of huge quantities of weapons and equipment at these sites.

Despite the impudence and injustice of this request, which is unprecedented in the dealings of the United Nations with States, we responded to the initiative of the Secretary-General, reached agreement with him and allowed the team which he had established to visit all those sites. The Security Council and the entire world, and especially the Secretary-General of the United Nations, know what happened and how the lies of Washington and London about those sites were exposed.

We dealt with this subject in a judicious and balanced way in order to achieve two main objectives. The first objective was to awaken the conscience of the Security Council and the international community regarding the facts. The second, and equally important objective was that our flexibility should lead to the lifting of the embargo within a short period, as the Secretary-General had promised that he would bring this matter to the attention of the Security Council.

In fact, however, neither this approach nor the situation we have already mentioned led to any perceptible result with respect to the lifting of the unjust embargo which has been imposed on our people and country for eight years now.

In proclaiming these truths to our people, to the Security Council and to the entire world, we shall call for a comprehensive national debate on this situation in the near future and on the position that should be adopted and the steps that should be taken to protect the supreme interests of the people and the security and sovereignty of the nation.

The forthcoming meeting between the representatives of Iraq and of the Special Commission will be an essential indication as to the outcome of the situation. Will the Special Commission recognize that the requirements of section C of resolution 687 (1991) have been met and will it submit its report requesting the Security Council to play its part and implement paragraph 22 in the near future? Or will it continue its well-known methods of manoeuvring, misleading people, raising marginal issues and dragging out its work interminably in the service of the criminal scheme of the United States the objective of which is the destruction of Iraq and its people?

We appeal to our great people to fulfil the role of which we know it to be capable and to stand behind its leaders in defending the position that will arise from the impending circumstances and discussions. We also call upon our noble Arab nation to take a responsible stand with respect to the tricks of the tricksters, the intransigence of the intransigent and the aggressiveness of the aggressors. The unjust will know what their fate will be. God is great. Let the despicable be spurned.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 28 July 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 28 July 1998, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61 and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tuluy TANÇ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

98-22427 (E) 310798

Annex

Letter dated 28 July 1998 from the Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letters dated 2, 9, 15 and 23 July 1998 addressed to you by Greek Cypriot officials at the United Nations, which contain allegations on "violations of the airspace of the Republic" (A/52/973-S/1998/609, A/52/976-S/1998/622, A/52/984-S/1998/651, A/52/988-S/1998/670 and A/52/991-S/1998/683, respectively).

It will be recalled that similar allegations of so-called airspace violations were rejected in toto in our previous communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 7 July 1998 (A/52/977-S/1998/626). Since the present allegations are no different than the preceding ones, they do not merit a detailed reply. I wish to reiterate, however, that flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State over which the usurper Greek Cypriot regime in the south has no jurisdiction or any right of say whatsoever.

The repeated allegations made by the Greek Cypriot administration are aimed at upholding the myth that it has sovereignty and jurisdiction over the whole island. This posture demonstrates that the Greek Cypriot side is not prepared to accept the present realities in the island (i.e. the existence of two sovereign peoples and their respective states) and engage in a meaningful dialogue on that basis. If there is to be a partnership settlement on the island, a realistic approach is needed on the part of the Greek Cypriots.

It is high time that all concerned parties openly acknowledge that the purely Greek Cypriot administration, whose jurisdiction extends only over the area of the island under Greek Cypriot control, is not and cannot be the government of the Turkish Cypriot people or the island as a whole.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/705
31 July 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 31 JULY 1998 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 30 July 1998 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, concerning the practices of the United States of America in obstructing the implementation of the oil-for-food programme. Such practices flout the will of the international community as represented by the United Nations and exploit the Security Council and the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) with the aim of achieving illegal political objectives against the people and the political regime of Iraq and of deliberately prolonging the day-to-day sufferings of the Iraqi people.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed Hamid HASAN
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

98-22472 (E) 310798 310798

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Annex

Identical letters dated 30 July 1998 from the Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I wish to inform you that the contracts in implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding are continuing to encounter difficulties with regard to their processing, confirmation and issuance, in spite of the fact that the items to which the contracts relate are specified in the categorized lists annexed to the procurement and distribution plan concerning the phases of its implementation which have all been approved by you.

In spite of the fact that over 14 months have passed since the specified starting time for phase II under the Memorandum of Understanding, and more than 8 months since phase III began and phase IV became operational, many contracts have been on hold for phases II and III since 4 June 1998.

With respect to phase II, which ended on 3 December 1997, there are still 21 contracts on hold, comprising medical supplies and foodstuffs, and equipment for the electricity sector. There are also 20 contracts that have been blocked by the representative of the United States of America in the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) (the 661 Committee) relating to the purchase of foodstuffs, medicines and equipment for the electricity sector.

This is in addition to contracts amounting to $40,385,000 which had been approved by the 661 Committee. However, the bank holding the account has not opened letters of credit with respect to them pending reconciliations between the 13 per cent account for the 3 northern governorates and the 52 per cent account for the 15 governorates. This has not so far been done despite persistent assurances as to the need to have the matter dealt with as it is preventing Iraq from using the funds that would have been made available to cover credits on contracts that are ready.

With respect to phase III which ended on 3 May 1998, there are still 17 contracts on hold which also concern the purchase of foodstuffs, medical requirements and special equipment for the electricity sector. This is in addition to 22 contracts that have been blocked by the representative of the United States of America for those sectors.

The fact that these contracts continue to be on hold or blocked, despite the ending of the implementation phases under the procurement and distribution plans for those two phases means, first and foremost, that the arrival of the material contracted for is delayed; as everybody knows, these materials come under the heading of basic humanitarian requirements of an urgent nature for the Iraqi people. Such delay results in wrecking the oil-for-food-and-medicines programme which was adopted as an exceptional and temporary measure to deal with the deteriorating humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people as a result of the blockade that has been imposed on it for over eight years.

A cursory review of the progress of contracts under the Memorandum of Understanding shows clearly that the underlying reason for all the instances in which these contracts have been put on hold or blocked is the position adopted by the representative of the United States of America in the 661 Committee who is at pains to fabricate all sorts of groundless pretexts and justifications to prevent the implementation of the contracts in a flexible manner, thereby delaying the delivery of the humanitarian supplies to the Iraqi people.

This stance adopted by the United States, which delays the arrival of food, medical equipment, medicines and spare parts for the electricity sector, reveals the falsity of the lying allegations of the United States. At a time when the United States Administration is shedding crocodile tears over the difficult humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people, it is endeavouring, by every means at its disposal, to put further obstacles and difficulties in the way of any measures aimed at eliminating, or even mitigating, the suffering of the Iraqi people.

In putting before you some concrete examples of the practices of the United States representative in the 661 Committee, which illustrate the position of the United States Administration, I wish to make clear to you the extent of that Administration's contempt for the will of the international community, as represented in the United Nations and in the Security Council.

The United States of America is endeavouring to exploit the Security Council and the 661 Committee in order to achieve illegal political objectives against the people and the political regime of Iraq. That country is also trying to attain those objectives by continuing to impede the progress of contracts for the purchase of humanitarian equipment and is thus deliberately prolonging the day-to-day sufferings of the Iraqi people, particularly children, women and the elderly, hundreds of whom fall victim each day to this inhumane United States attitude.

Iraq hopes that you will make every effort in your power to put an end to this blocking action by the United States of America and that you will endeavour to secure the implementation of all the contracts that have been put on hold or blocked, all of which involve materials and equipment that are urgently needed by the Iraqi people.

Please inform the members of the Security Council of this letter and have it circulated as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Tariq AZIZ
Deputy Prime Minister
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/706
31 July 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 30 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the following statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union with regard to Guinea-Bissau, issued on 29 July 1998. (Copies in French and English are attached.)

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as an official Security Council document.

(Signed) Ernst SUCHARIPA
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

98-22479 (E) 030898 030898

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Guinea-Bissau issued on 29 July 1998

The European Union welcomes the signing by the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the self-proclaimed military junta of a "Memorandum of Understanding" under the auspices of the "Contact Group" (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe) of the "community of Portuguese speaking countries" providing, inter alia, for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the opening of humanitarian corridors and the beginning of negotiations.

The European Union calls upon all parties in Guinea-Bissau to abide scrupulously by this "Memorandum of Understanding" and to commit themselves constructively to the negotiation process for reconciliation and a lasting peace in the country.

The European Union recalls its readiness to provide humanitarian aid to the displaced persons and refugees of war as well as its willingness to participate in the efforts required for the social and economic rehabilitation of Guinea-Bissau.

The Central and Eastern European countries and Cyprus associated with the European Union and the European Free Trade Association countries, Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/707
3 August 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 3 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 2 August 1998 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the hostile and unlawful act committed by Kuwait against Iraq when Kuwaiti coastguard forces detained two ships bound for Iraq with cargoes of foodstuffs.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

98-22618 (E) 040898 040898

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Annex

Letter dated 2 August 1998 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

We should like to call your attention to the fact that Iraq, which is suffering under an unjust embargo that has now been maintained against it for eight years, continues to be the object of all manner of unlawful practices on the part of the Kuwaiti authorities. Kuwaiti coastguard forces have now stopped and detained two ships registered in the United Arab Emirates that were carrying foodstuffs for Iraq.

In its issue for Saturday, 11 July 1998, the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Anba' quotes a member of the coastguard as saying: "The interception of the two ships is in keeping with the customary measures taken to investigate ships bound for Iraq. Our objective is to apply the sanctions imposed on Iraq rigorously, and we stop ships inside Kuwaiti territorial waters and investigate them before they reach Iraq."

This action by the Kuwaiti coastguard has no legal basis and thus constitutes an unmitigated act of hostility that is incompatible with the Security Council resolutions that established the ceasefire following the 30-Power aggression launched by Coalition forces against Iraq in January 1991. Those resolutions did not, moreover, prohibit Iraq from obtaining food or other humanitarian requirements, and they did not authorize the Government of the Kuwait regime to intercept ships bound for Iraq with foodstuffs on board.

As it condemns this illegal and unwarranted conduct, the Government of Iraq calls upon the United Nations to put an end to unacceptable Kuwaiti practices whose only objective is to tighten the grip of the unjust embargo that is being maintained against the Iraqi people in violation of all humanitarian standards and values. It reserves its right to take action, at the appropriate time, to defend the rights and interests of the Iraqi people.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said Al-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs of
the Republic of Iraq

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/708
3 August 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC AND ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 3 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a cable message addressed to the Security Council from Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, Minister for Foreign Affairs, concerning the latest Eritrean military aggression against the Sudanese territories.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Elfatih ERWA
Permanent Representative

98-22639 (E) 040898 040898

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Annex

[Original: Arabic]

Letter dated 30 July 1998 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan addressed to the President of the the Security Council

I refer to my previous letters, of which the most recent was issued as an official document of the Security Council (S/1998/258) on 19 March 1998, concerning continued acts of aggression by Eritrea against the Sudan's borders. I regret to inform you that the Eritrean regime, which has become a destabilizing element in the region, continues to perpetrate acts of aggression against the eastern borders of the Sudan, intimidating the innocent civilians there.

On the morning of Tuesday, 28 July 1998, hostile Eritrean forces shelled a number of Sudanese border villages, namely Hafarat, Awad, Galasa and Abu Alga. This was followed by a ground attack, carried out by Eritrean forces, together with Sudanese rebel elements, who were supported by infantry, a number of tanks and artillery. Two infantry units, using artillery of various calibres as well as mortars and 122-mm rocket launchers, shelled the area for a period of three hours from inside Eritrean territory. This was followed by the ground attack. As a result, a number of civilians were killed and many citizens were forced to leave the area.

The Government of the Sudan continues to exercise the highest possible degree of self-restraint, with a view to safeguarding security and stability in the area. The Government affirms that the Sudanese armed forces, which successfully repelled the attack, are capable of defending its citizens and their property. However, self-restraint and patience have their limits and the Government of the Sudan reserves its full right to defend its territory and its citizens.

In drawing your attention to the details of these attacks by Eritrea, we hope that the Security Council will do its part to ensure that Eritrea brings a halt to its openly hostile policies towards Sudan and its repeated acts of aggression against Sudanese territory, in order to safeguard stability, security and peace in the area.

(Signed) Mustafa Osman Ismail
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Sudan

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/709
4 August 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 4 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that violations of Iraq's airspace by United States aircraft continued between 16 and 31 July 1998 and that the aircraft in question carried out reconnaissance and engaged in acts of provocation, as set forth in the annex hereto.

Your intervention is requested with a view to bringing a halt to actions that, as flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, pose a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq.

These actions continue to alarm the civilian population and to cause serious damage to private and public property. The Republic of Iraq affirms its right to seek legal compensation for the damage being inflicted on the Iraqi people and the Iraqi State by these actions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

98-22742 (E) 050898 050898

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Annex

Violations of Iraq's airspace and damage caused, 16-31 July 1998

1. In the northern region 118 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres over the following cities and towns: Dohuk, Mosul, Amadiyah, Aqrah, Zakho, Irbil, Tall Afar, Rawanduz and Koysanjaq.

2. In the southern region 648 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Nasiriyah, Samawah, Artawi, Ushbayjah, Jalibah, Salman, Busayyah, Qurnah, Chabaish, Shinafiyah, Rumaythah, Basrah, Hayy, Shatrah, Amarah, Qal'at Sukkar, Safwan, Suq al-Shuyukh, Hamzah, Maymunah, Abu Sukhayr, Rifa'i, Najaf, Qal'at Salih and Ali al-Sharqi.

3. Ten violations were committed by TR-1 reconnaissance aircraft flying at altitudes of 20,000 metres and at speeds of 600 kilometres per hour.

4. At 0845, 0853 and 0907 hours on 18 July 1998 United States aircraft violated Iraqi airspace over Umm Qasr.

5. On 11, 12 and 13 July 1998 United States aircraft broke the sound barrier over Tall Afar, breaking window panes in State offices and the homes of citizens and alarming a number of residents.

UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/1001
S/1998/710
4 August 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 3 August 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 3 August 1998, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tuluy TANÇ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

98-22730 (E) 040898

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Annex

Letter dated 3 August 1998 from the Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 19 July 1998 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot delegate at the United Nations, which contains false and misleading accusations against my country, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (A/52/989-S/1998/671).

At the outset, I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot delegate, who depicts the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as a "secessionist entity" or "occupied part of the island", that the only occupation in Cyprus is the 35 year-old usurpation and continued occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of government of the bi-communal Republic of Cyprus established under international treaties in 1960. The Greek Cypriot side has no right to question the legality of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which was established through the free and democratic will of the Turkish Cypriot people.

The Greek Cypriot delegate also cites the visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus of His Excellency Mr. Mesut Yilmaz, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, and other high-level officials, which took place at the invitation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on the occasion of the 20 July celebrations marking the twenty-fourth anniversary of Peace and Freedom Day.

I wish to stress that the relations between Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are deeply rooted in a common history, culture and kinship and are based on mutual recognition. Turkey, as one of the guarantor powers of the 1960 partnership republic, has provided effective security guarantees for the Turkish Cypriots in the face of the long-standing hostile and aggressive actions of the Greek Cypriots. Prime Minister Yilmaz's visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus with other high-level Turkish officials on the occasion of the 20 July celebrations, in the context of the special relations that exist between the two countries, is a clear sign of Turkey's continuing commitment to the security and well-being of the Turkish Cypriot people.

The clamour created by the Greek Cypriot side over the visit, therefore, is totally unwarranted and originates from its untenable claim to be the sole sovereign authority over the entire island and the desire to totally isolate the Turkish Cypriot people, which constitutes the real provocation and an obstacle to a settlement. It should be recalled that the Greek Cypriot administration in South Cyprus frequently hosts high-level delegations from Greece, the most recent occasions of which being, among others, the visit of Mr. Constantinos Stephanopoulos, the Greek President, from 25 to 28 June 1998, and that of Mr. Athanios Tzoganis, the Greek Army Chief of Staff, from 22 to 24 April 1998.

In connection with the unwarranted charges concerning the participation of vessels and aircraft from Turkey in the above-mentioned ceremonies, I would like to reiterate that flights by Turkish aircraft within the airspace and flight

information region of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is a matter that concerns the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkey as two sovereign independent States which recognize each other. Similarly, the navigation of ships in the territorial waters of the Turkish Republic of Norther Cyprus and the use of port facilities take place with the full knowledge and consent and, in this case, upon the invitation, of the appropriate authorities of the State. The Greek Cypriot administration has no jurisdiction, control or authority whatsoever over the national territory, airspace or flight information region of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

It is regrettable that the Greek Cypriot side is relentlessly pursuing a campaign of harmful rhetoric, coupled with an intensive and dangerous militarization. Clearly, the Greek Cypriot side is not yet prepared to come to terms with the existing realities and the concept of a new partnership settlement based on the existence of two sovereign States on the island. We hope that the Greek Cypriot side will drop its current hostile posture, so that common sense and realism may prevail, thus opening a window of opportunity for a peaceful settlement.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/53/205
S/1998/711
4 August 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Items 112 and 113 of the provisional agenda*
RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 4 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have kept you abreast of the evolving situation in South Asia, which continues to deteriorate and which is becoming the cause of increasing concern for the international community.

In the wake of the nuclearization of South Asia, it has become imperative for both India and Pakistan to urgently and comprehensively address issues of peace and security, particularly those relating to nuclear and conventional restraint and stabilization, the avoidance of conflict and the adoption of confidence-building measures. The international community was unanimous in its view that the deterioration of the security situation in South Asia, and especially the more recent developments, were inescapably linked with the outstanding dispute of Jammu and Kashmir.

As you are well aware, Pakistan is committed to a meaningful dialogue with India on issues relating to peace and security in South Asia and the root cause of the tension between the two countries, namely, the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Last month, the Prime Minister of Pakistan went to Colombo in the hope of a positive outcome from a bilateral meeting with his Indian counterpart in the context of the summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. In his inaugural address to the summit, the Prime Minister publicly announced Pakistan's willingness to resume a dialogue with India on the basis of the agreement reached between the two countries on 23 June 1997 at Islamabad.

* A/53/150.

Unfortunately, the meeting in Colombo was fruitless. India was unwilling to discuss, with an specificity or urgency, the most important issues of peace and security, including confidence-building measures and Jammu and Kashmir, which the international community had been rightly urging should be addressed with positive action and without any loss of time. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the two countries, who met in Colombo following the meeting of the two Prime Ministers, also failed to make any headway. The Indian effort has been to dilute the core issues by merging them with issues of far lesser significance in a so-called "composite approach" to the bilateral dialogue. This is contrary to the understanding reached at Islamabad on the mechanism for the dialogue.

In view of the negative Indian approach to the resumption of the dialogue, Pakistan considers it appropriate to hand over the attached list of confidence-building measures for adoption by India, in order to reduce the tense situation in Indian-held Kashmir and to ameliorate the lot of the Kashmiris (see annex).

The situation has been further compounded by the recent unprovoked Indian artillery and gun fire across a broad front along the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir, causing heavy civilian casualties and damage to property. This has worsened the overall situation considerably. We see this as a part of a pattern and regrettably, an intimidatory effort which cannot succeed. We are seriously concerned at a further possible deterioration, with unforeseeable consequences.

We believe that the international community should urge restraint upon India and counsel the resumption of dialogue. For our part, Pakistan is willing to immediately address issues of peace and security, including confidence-building measures and Jammu and Kashmir. We are also prepared to simultaneously agree on a calendar of meetings on all other issues on the agenda of the India-Pakistan dialogue as defined in the agreement of 23 June 1997.

I would like to reiterate that, in parallel with Pakistan's efforts to resume a meaningful dialogue with India, the United Nations should consider the following actions:

(a) A deeper engagement of the Secretary-General in resolving outstanding issues between India and Pakistan, and particularly the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) The strengthening of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and the regular submission of its reports to the Security Council;

(c) The appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General on Jammu and Kashmir.

I trust that these suggestions will be given the careful examination and follow-up that is demanded by the tense situation in South Asia.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly under agenda items 112 and 113, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad KAMAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Confidence-building measures in Jammu and Kashmir

Proposed by Pakistan

We propose the following confidence-building measures with a view to bringing about a relaxation of tensions in Jammu and Kashmir:

(a) Strengthening of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and its authority to patrol on both sides of the line of control, with regular reports to the Security Council;

(b) Release of Kashmiri detainees;

(c) Removal of Indian army pickets in Srinagar and other Kashmiri towns and villages;

(d) Phased reduction of Indian troops from the towns and villages of Indian-held Kashmir;

(e) Cessation of search/arrest operations;

(f) Transmission of information about missing persons in Indian-held Kashmir;

(g) Stationing of the International Committee of the Red Cross and United Nations human rights monitors in Indian-held Kashmir;

(h) Recognition of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference as a legitimate Kashmiri representative.

India should consider the above suggestions in the context of efforts towards addressing the Jammu and Kashmir issue, which is the core problem between Pakistan and India.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/712
5 August 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1160 (1998)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) of 31 March 1998. It covers the period since my last report of 2 July 1998 (S/1998/608). As at 31 July 1998, I had received several communications from Member States and regional organizations relating to developments in Kosovo, as well as to the steps they had taken to give effect to the prohibitions imposed by resolution 1160 (1998). By a letter dated 9 July 1998 (S/1998/657), the Acting Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations conveyed a statement issued on 8 July 1998 by the Contact Group regarding the situation in Kosovo. I also received a letter dated 21 July from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations (S/1998/675) which contained the Declaration of the Presidency of the European Union of 20 July 1998. In a letter dated 16 July 1998 (S/1998/654), the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia transmitted remarks of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in connection with my previous report. On 24 July 1998, the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) conveyed to me updated information on the situation in Kosovo, which I attach in annex I to the present report.

II. SECURITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 1160 (1998)

2. As of 31 July, in addition to those States listed in my earlier report (S/1998/608), Greece, Germany and Liechtenstein reported to the Committee pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 1160 (1998) on the steps they had taken to give effect to the prohibitions imposed by that resolution.

III. COMPREHENSIVE REGIME TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROHIBITIONS IMPOSED BY SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1160 (1998)

3. In paragraph 15 of resolution 1160 (1998), the Security Council requested that, in consultation with appropriate regional organizations, I include in my first report to the Council recommendations for the establishment of a

comprehensive regime to monitor the implementation of the prohibitions imposed by that resolution. It also called upon all States, in particular neighbouring States, to extend full cooperation in that regard.

4. In my report to the Council dated 30 April 1998 (S/1998/361), I provided a general outline of the concept for a comprehensive monitoring regime and stated that the United Nations was unable, within existing budgetary resources, to establish and administer such a regime. I reiterate my view expressed therein that for a monitoring regime to be comprehensive, it would require the deployment at key points of teams composed of qualified experts, as well as the setting up of a fully equipped communications centre to support the work of the monitoring teams and to interact with the Sanctions Committee and its secretariat. These teams would provide advice and assistance to the authorities of neighbouring and other States that bear the responsibility for enforcement of the mandatory measures in accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998).

5. In my second report pursuant to resolution 1160 (1998), dated 4 June 1998 (S/1998/470), I stated that upon receipt of the views of the organizations I had contacted, I would submit my recommendations to the Security Council for a comprehensive monitoring regime, taking into account the existing potential within the United Nations and the views expressed by those organizations.

6. In addition to OSCE, replies were received from the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Western European Union (WEU) and the Danube Commission. Those communications were annexed to my earlier reports (S/1998/470, S/1998/608). On 14 July 1998, the Secretary-General of NATO informed me of his organization's decision at the current stage to proceed with the "Stabilization Force (SFOR) option" to step up its efforts to monitor the Bosnian border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and to forward to me any relevant information on suspected violations of resolution 1160 (1998) in SFOR's area of operations. The text of the letter from the Secretary-General of NATO is contained in annex II to the present report.

7. All the organizations I contacted have stated their readiness to contribute actively to the monitoring of the prohibitions imposed by resolution 1160 (1998). At this stage, however, the overall resources pledged by those organizations would not allow for the establishment of a comprehensive monitoring regime as envisaged in resolution 1160 (1998). Nonetheless, their proposed contributions, coupled with that of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), as outlined in my reports to the Security Council dated 1 June and 14 July 1998 (S/1998/454 and S/1998/644 respectively), provide a useful framework for reporting on violations of the prohibitions imposed by the above resolution and for assisting the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) in discharging its mandate.

8. Accordingly, I propose to invite the organizations mentioned in paragraph 6 above to forward to the Secretariat, for consideration by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1160 (1998), relevant information based on reports of their own monitors or any other information that may be available to them, concerning violations or

allegations of violations of the prohibitions imposed by Security Council resolution 1160 (1998).

9. On 21 July 1998, the Security Council adopted resolution 1186 (1998), by which it decided to authorize an increase in the troop strength of UNPREDEP and to extend its current mandate for a period of six months until 28 February 1999, including the tasks of monitoring the border areas and reporting to me on illicit arms flows and other activities that are prohibited under resolution 1160 (1998).

10. In the absence of an integrated coordinating mechanism, it would be essential for representatives of participating organizations, UNPREDEP and the Secretariat to hold, as necessary, periodic meetings in order to exchange information on the monitoring of the prohibitions established by resolution 1160 (1998) and to address practical issues arising in that connection.

IV. SITUATION IN KOSOVO

11. In early July, efforts by the members of the Contact Group, EU and OSCE offered hopeful signs that meaningful dialogue might be possible between the parties to the conflict. Regrettably, those hopes were not realized. I must therefore report that, as the Security Council is already aware, the situation in Kosovo continues to deteriorate. Increased heavy fighting between the security forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) has been reported from several areas in Kosovo. The numbers of civilian and military casualties are at their highest point since the outbreak of the conflict. The attitudes of the two sides appear to be hardening with every day of fighting. There is no progress on renewal of dialogue. Most disturbing are reports of increased tensions along the border between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Albania. In this regard, I share the concerns expressed in the Declaration of the Presidency of the European Union of 20 July 1998 (S/1998/675).

12. The unrelenting violence has led to a dramatic increase in internally displaced persons in Kosovo and Montenegro since my last report. According to estimates by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 100,000 people have been driven from their homes by the conflict. Between 70,000 and 80,000 people were internally displaced in Kosovo by the end of July. Authorities in Montenegro had recorded 22,000 internally displaced persons from Kosovo by 22 July. As local food production has come to a standstill, food shortages could worsen sharply. With the increasing number of displaced persons and the approaching winter, Kosovo has the potential of becoming a humanitarian disaster.

13. The number of refugees in northern Albania remains approximately the same (estimated at around 13,500) with 10,300 registered refugees. The majority (some 10,000) arrived in Albania between 29 May and 9 June. While one of the main refugee locations, Tropoje, lies just 7 kilometres from the border, the proximity of the border has not created a security risk for refugees at this stage. However, with the increasing militarization of the border region and the

escalation of tensions in Kosovo, destabilization of the Albanian border region is possible.

14. United Nations agencies are intensifying their efforts to prevent a major humanitarian and refugee crisis. In response to the consolidated inter-agency flash appeal for humanitarian assistance needs related to the Kosovo crisis: 1 June-31 August 1998, however, only 9.7 per cent of assistance requirements (US$ 1.7 million) had been pledged by donors as of 14 July. Most of the funding, provided by Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden and Switzerland, was intended for UNHCR assistance programmes for refugees and internally displaced persons in Albania and Montenegro. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continue to jointly assess all possible means for assisting the networks and facilities to provide vaccination for children. WHO is intensifying its coordination with health-related non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to properly address the donations of medicine. UNICEF and UNHCR are to meet with the Ministry of Education of Montenegro in order to explore ways of supporting schools hosting classes with internally displaced children. WHO is also planning an assessment of the medical and psychosocial needs of the displaced population in Montenegro.

V. OBSERVATIONS

15. The limitations on my capacity to report on the situation in Kosovo, as requested in paragraph 14 of resolution 1160 (1998), remain unchanged. At the same time, it is my understanding that there has been an increase in the presence of diplomatic observers from European and Contact Group countries in general who, as I suggested in my last report, might be better placed to provide the Security Council with a reliable flow of information concerning the situation on the ground.

16. The continuing infiltration from outside the borders of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of weapons and fighting men is a source of continuing widespread concern. The sharp escalation of violence and the reported use of excessive force by security forces against civilians as part of the government operations against the KLA are cause for both distress and alarm. A particularly dangerous element in the situation is the move in certain quarters away from a willingness to search for compromise on a basis of multi-ethnic communities. Centrifugal tendencies appear to be gaining ground. As indicated in paragraphs 12 and 13, the continuing conflict has led to a growing number of internally displaced persons and refugees. This in turn causes further instability. The international community risks once against being placed in a position where it is only dealing with the symptoms of a conflict through its humanitarian agencies.

17. This situation is aggravated by the failure of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Albanian Kosovars to enter into serious negotiations on the future status of Kosovo. The continuation or further escalation of this conflict has dangerous implications for the stability of the region. Given the responsibilities of the United Nations in the wider region and the ethnic makeup in neighbouring countries, I cannot but express my alarm at this prospect. Several Security Council-mandated or Security Council-

authorized operations in the region are playing a useful role in promoting dialogue and harmony among different ethnic groups. I wish to record before the Security Council my strong hope that the question of Kosovo will be examined not in isolation but in a manner that fully takes into account and embraces the broad, regional context and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Annex I

Information on the situation in Kosovo and on measures taken by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, submitted pursuant to paragraphs 13 and 16 of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998)

Summary

Since mid-June, there has been further escalation of the conflict in Kosovo, with the hostilities spreading to engulf the entire south-western part of the province.

By mid-July, the crisis had reached new levels of intensity. As the fighting drew nearer Pristina, the "Kosovo Liberation Army" (KLA) removed any ambiguity as to its intention to bring the province under its control.

Numerous armed clashes were reported from the regions of Kosovo bordering Albania.

All appeals of the international community for talks and a cessation of the hostilities have remained unanswered. Prospects for a negotiated settlement appear dim and time is running out for the attainment of a peaceful solution. The Kosovo crisis entered into a phase of unpredictable consequences for regional stability and is therefore a source of deep concern for the Chairman-in-Office as it is for the entire Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Violence and the use of force

1. The period between the 16 June meeting between President Milošević of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and President Yeltsin of the Russian Federation and the end of the month was marked by a drop in the number of combat operations in Kosovo. However, units of the Yugoslav Army remained active in the border region. Isolated incidents also took place along Yugoslavia's border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

2. Shortly thereafter the KLA became more active, moving on from defensive actions to sporadic attacks on the Yugoslav security forces. New information continued to be received on the fighting between the KLA and the Serb security forces around Pec, Cecanice and Djakovic. Offensive operations, with heavy fighting and casualties, have been the hallmarks of the period since 20 July. The civilian population has also suffered losses and the numbers of the refugees from the area have grown.

3. Meanwhile, the OSCE presence (mission) in Albania has reported a number of serious armed clashes inside Kosovo, close to the border with Albania, with the number of such incidents increasing after 15 July. OSCE observers witnessed stepped-up military activities in the Decani area. Increased cross-border

transit of KLA troops as well as shipments of arms and ammunition were recorded, as was a flare-up of the fighting on the border region on 18 July.

Situation on the Albanian/Kosovo border

4. Military activity by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has continued unabated since mid-May. In the border areas close to Albania, many villages and hamlets have been targeted. More recently, the larger town of Orahovac has also been the scene of fighting. This has caused an increase in the number of internally displaced persons. The refugee movement to Albania, however, has come to a virtual halt. This is probably a result of the deterrent measures by forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including the laying of mines and increased patrols at the border.

5. The continued violence in Kosovo has reinforced overall militancy among ethnic Albanians on both sides of the border. KLA transborder activities have become increasingly overt. Regular movement of KLA arms/ammunition and manpower has been observed by OSCE across known refugee routes. There are strong indications that some of these routes have been mined on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia side, and are targeted by direct and indirect fire. OSCE observers have recently sighted fresh shell craters 25 metres from the border on the Albanian side.

6. The increased levels of tension and armed confrontation have led to further destabilization of the north-east region of Albania. There are indications that the vital ferry link on the main supply route to the border area is under the control of the KLA.

Access to Kosovo

7. The number of visits to Kosovo by foreign diplomats posted in Belgrade has grown since the meeting between President Milošević and President Yeltsin.

8. However, regions hit by heavy fighting and those preparing for armed operations were virtually impossible to visit. In danger zones Serbian police did grant individual passage permits while warning prospective travellers of considerable risk.

9. Units and outposts of the KLA continued to stop individuals for ID checks and sometimes refused to give access to some areas of Kosovo under its control.

10. On 6 July, the International Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission started work in the war-torn province, with the participation of the OSCE Troika. Observers from the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the European Union have set up offices in Pristina and operate from there.

11. On 21 July, at Belgrade, the heads of the diplomatic observer missions, representing Contact Group countries, the European Union (EU) Troika and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, presented their first report on the situation in Kosovo.

Dialogue

12. Despite strenuous diplomatic efforts, the international community has so far failed to bring about a resumption of the dialogue between the country's authorities and representatives of the Kosovo Albanians. The Serbian side has reiterated its understanding that a dialogue should be conducted within the framework of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and that the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia would first be guaranteed. Units of the Serb special forces remained in Kosovo.

13. Representatives of the Albanian negotiating team and the Chairman of the Kosovo Democratic League are of the opinion that the present-day conditions of conflict are not conducive to dialogue. In their view, a withdrawal from Kosovo of the Serb special forces, a cessation of the operations aimed against the Albanian civilian population and putting the idea of Kosovo's independence on the agenda of the negotiations would be their preconditions before a resumption of the dialogue.

14. The emergence on the Kosovar Albanian political scene of the KLA, as a force commanding considerable influence throughout the Albanian community, has introduced a new element into the idea of negotiations. Representatives of the KLA believe that the political parties should accept the existence and importance of the armed organization and that none of the parties represents the KLA. Neither do they recognize the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova. The KLA further rules out the possibility of declaring a ceasefire should the talks resume without them being accepted as one of the negotiating parties.

15. The commitment of the international community is of immense importance for the ongoing efforts to defuse the threat of a further escalation of the conflict. During their visits to both Belgrade and Pristina, international visitors have tried to pressure the two belligerent parties to stop the use of violence. The string of measures adopted with the purpose of bringing more pressure to bear on the Belgrade authorities includes the 8 June European Union decision (which went into force on 23 June) to freeze within the boundaries of the European Union all the fixed assets and financial resources of both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia, and the 29 June resolution of the Council of Ministers banning all flights by JAT airlines as well as other Yugoslav carriers to EU destinations.

OSCE activities

16. Following the communiqué released in Moscow on 16 June at the close of the meeting between President Yeltsin and President Milošević, Mr. Bronislaw Geremek, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland and Chairman-in-Office of OSCE, wrote a letter to Mr. Milošević requesting clarification of some points of the communiqué's paragraph dealing with OSCE. The letter elicited a response from Mr. Z. Jovanović, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, who wrote to Mr. Geremek inviting a delegation of political directors to Belgrade "to start negotiations simultaneously on the acceptance of the OSCE mission in Kosovo and Metohija and the regulation of the membership rights of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the organization". In his reply

Mr. Geremek proclaimed his 'readiness to begin exploratory talks' between OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

17. The exploratory talks, which were held at Belgrade on 3 July, revealed that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia did not accept a return of the Gonzalez Mission and/or the OSCE Long-term Mission unless the problem of the Federal Republic's participation in OSCE had first been resolved. Moreover, the Federal Republic also rejected the idea of a step-by-step 're-establishment' of its membership. As a gesture of 'good will', the Federal Republic invited an 'OSCE assessment mission' to visit the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia without any preconditions.

18. As a result of the above invitation, an OSCE technical assessment mission visited the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 14 to 22 July 1998. Its report and conclusions are attached to the present report as a source of additional information.

Chairman-in-Office of the Organization
for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Warsaw, 24 July 1998.

Enclosure

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Report of the technical assessment mission on its visit to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 14 to 22 July 1998

I. MISSION OBJECTIVE

1. The mission had the task set by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to go to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to make a preliminary assessment of the relations between OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with a view to facilitating the mission of Mr. Felipe Gonzalez (as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office) and a comprehensive resolution of these issues, including the re-establishment of the OSCE Long-term Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the basis of OSCE Permanent Council decision 218 of 11 March 1998.

II. FRAMEWORK

2. In Belgrade, the 12-member delegation, headed by Ambassador Hansjorg Eiff of Germany, met with the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at the outset as well as towards the end of the visit, and had discussions with Federal and/or Serbian ministers responsible for the media, national and minority rights, and culture; the Chairman and three other members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (representing predominantly government opinion); the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees; leaders of the political opposition; non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (including human rights groups); representatives of the independent media; and international organizations. In Belgrade it also met with representatives of regional parties from the Sandjak and Vojvodina. The Head of Mission met twice with the foreign policy adviser of President Milosević.

3. In Kosovo, the mission met the local Serb authorities; political representatives of Kosovo Albanians (including several members of the negotiating team); the Albanian Students Union; the Helsinki Committee; and the Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission.

4. In Montenegro, the mission was received by President Djukanović and met with: the Prime Minister; the Chairman of the National Assembly; the Foreign Minister and the Minister responsible for ethnic minorities; and representatives of the media and of human rights organizations.

5. The Yugoslav authorities cooperated fully with the mission and provided assistance to facilitate its work.

6. The mission focused its work on the following issues:

- The possible return of the long-term missions to Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina;

- The mission of the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;

- The situation on the ground in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina insofar as it would affect the work of the returned missions and the mission by the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office;

- Recent developments in the areas of concern (e.g. media, judiciary, legal and electoral systems) highlighted by Mr. Gonzalez in his 1996 report;

- Possible participation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the work of OSCE.

III. RETURN OF THE LONG-TERM MISSIONS TO KOSOVO, SANDJAK AND VOJVODINA

7. There was a general recognition of the usefulness of the work of the three missions prior to their interruption in 1993. All regional groupings favoured a return of the missions to their areas. One Vojvcdina representative suggested that that region might be covered from a base located more centrally in Belgrade, if a mission was to be established there. While some Albanians expressed reservations as to whether the mission in Kosovo could have prevented the serious deterioration of the situation, they believed that its presence could have served as a partial check on the violence. Many interlocutors noted that the missions generally could help to bridge the gap between the communities, and serve as a reassurance, and point of contact for the minorities. It was suggested that the missions could be given the mandate of an ombudsman, to receive and assess complaints about human rights violations submitted to them.

8. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia side, both in Belgrade and in Pristina, also acknowledged the fairness and accuracy of the missions' reporting and recognized that, in the current situation, a mission could play a useful role in Kosovo. It was clear they would consider the possibility of a mission returning to Kosovo alone. They noted that OSCE missions were only dispatched to OSCE participating States. They placed the return of the mission to Kosovo firmly in the context of the agreement between President Milosević and President Yeltsin in Moscow on 16 June and linked it to what they described as the simultaneous readmission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to OSCE. The OSCE delegation stressed that the return of the missions was insufficient to secure the participation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the organization, which would require a consensus decision of all OSCE member States.

IV. ATTITUDE EXPRESSED TOWARDS THE MISSION OF THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OSCE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE

9. The assessment mission emphasized to all its interlocutors its role of preparing the ground for the mission by the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mr. Felipe Gonzalez, and made it clear that it was no substitute for that mission. It also stressed that Mr. Gonzalez's mandate covered the whole of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo. The Foreign Minister said the Gonzalez mission of 1996 had been completed. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had not been consulted on the second mission. The Federal Republic was ready to discuss this once the question of its participation in the OSCE was settled. The Chairman of the Federal Parliament Foreign Relations Committee went further, stating that the mandate could not cover internal issues and criticizing the earlier report of Mr. Gonzalez.

10. All opposition political parties to whom the mission spoke as well as all representatives of the ethnic minorities, the independent media and human rights groups favoured a continuation of the Gonzalez mission. Many said so publicly during the visit. Among the most keen were those parties which had boycotted the Serbian Republic and presidential elections in 1997 because they had believed the electoral conditions were unacceptable. Some of the Albanian representatives noted that any international mediator on Kosovo would need strong international backing, and that there were already others involved in that field.

V. KOSOVO

11. Federal Foreign Minister Jovanović, like other government representatives, emphasized the official view that the Kosovo problem was one of separatism and terrorism, and not of national and minority rights. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia needed to defend the interests of all the residents of Kosovo. The situation could be resolved only through direct dialogue between the parties on a series of confidence-building measures and forms of self-governance for the province, including different forms of autonomy. The outcome must respect the territorial integrity of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the rights of all nationalities and minorities, according to European standards. The Minister also highlighted the progress he said the Federal Republic had made on humanitarian issues. He called for European countries to stop what he claimed was the provision of assistance to Albanian extremists in Kosovo from groups based on their territory.

12. The mission's visit to Pristina was depressing. The total lack of trust between the two communities, which was reflected both in an absence of everyday human contact and a lack of communication between representatives of the two communities, was striking. This was one of the key reasons for the failure of the two sides to negotiate. It was very obvious that the most pressing need was for an immediate cessation of hostilities. The representatives of the local Serb authorities insisted that the Serb security forces only responded to attacks made on them by the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). They claimed that the continuing presence of Serbian special units in the province

was only necessary because of KLA attacks. They also denied that the Serbs had used disproportionate force in their engagements with the KLA. They handed the mission lists of names of 30 Albanians and 14 Serbs who they said had been killed by the KLA, together with a list of 111 Serbs, Albanians and other minority nationals who they claimed had been kidnapped since the beginning of the year. They said they were ready to continue the dialogue which had begun with the meeting between President Milosević and Mr. Rugova on 15 May. But the Albanian side had failed to appear for the scheduled meetings since 22 May.

13. Representatives of the Kosovar Albanian political parties and community emphasized the need to find a rapid solution to the situation. They insisted that the KLA was a defensive grouping of Albanians who had taken up arms to protect themselves against the Serbian security forces. They highlighted the growing popularity of the KLA and the diminishing support for political parties as a whole. Some openly admitted that they had offered to serve as that body's political wing. But to date no party was fulfilling that role. Most significantly, no political personality distanced himself from the KLA.

14. The Albanians insisted that no dialogue could begin while, they maintained, Serb security forces continued attacking the Kosovar Albanian population. They stressed the importance of international involvement in the process, into which they said the KLA needed to be brought. All agreed that Kosovo's rights as set out in the 1974 Constitution were non-negotiable and constituted the starting point for any dialogue. Some believed that there should be an interim arrangement, including confidence-building measures, before talks on a final settlement could begin. In this context some parties looked to intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to guarantee the security environment in the region. While some said the outcome of this dialogue should not be prejudged, it was clear that all interlocutors saw independence as the final goal. None were prepared to accept autonomy, to whatever degree, as the final outcome. There seemed to be no readiness either to accept a moratorium on the status issue.

15. The Kosovo Albanians told the mission that some 300 Albanians had been killed, and 150,000 displaced, since the beginning of the year. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said it had identified the whereabouts of some 57,000 internally displaced persons in the province but believed the total number was over 100,000. UNHCR said that, since mid-June, it had in principle been given free access to all areas by both the Serb authorities and the KLA. For the time being, food supplies seemed to be adequate. However, if the situation continued to deteriorate, the international community should be aware that the supply of food to the population could become very difficult once winter came. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia said it had asked the Albanian Government to allow the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees to visit northern Albania, to meet the Kosovo refugees and to encourage them to return. So far the Federal Republic had not received any direct reply from Tirana. (This issue is being pursued by the Austrian European Union (EU) Presidency.) If a bilateral agreement could be reached, UNHCR would provide the logistics.

16. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia said that it favoured a census held under OSCE auspices in Kosovo to establish the ethnic breakdown in the province.

VI. SANDJAK

17. The mission's interlocutors placed the problems in the Sandjak in the context of the loss by the Muslims of their status as a nation (which they had held under the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) with the creation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992. Stress was placed upon the polarization between Muslims and Serbs, which encouraged voters to opt for parties representing more extreme ethnic options, and the resulting increase in tension between the two communities. The mission was told that Muslims were not adequately represented in key positions in State institutions, such as those of senior police officer and school headmaster. While the most serious human rights violations in the areas had occurred in the early 1990s, the mission was told that in July 1997, the Government had removed the elected Muslim local authorities in Novi Pazar on questionable legal grounds. It was noted that, since that action, no fresh elections had been called. Nor had appeals to the Constitutional and Supreme courts produced any response. This had led people to lose faith in the parliamentary system and the country's institutions. It could also encourage the radicalization of the population.

18. The attention of the mission was also drawn to the problems caused by the arrival in the Sandjak of refugees from Kosovo.

VII. VOJVODINA

19. The mission noted that none of the Serbian and Hungarian regional party interlocutors from Vojvodina said they were seeking territorial autonomy. However, the representatives of one non-ethnic party pointed out that the return of territorial autonomy to Kosovo could lead to similar demands for Vojvodina and to unrest among the population. Most interlocutors were seeking increased personal rights (and in the case of some Serbs, a political decentralization of power to the Province of Vojvodina). One Hungarian party had had contracts with the Government to try to improve the community's position. This had led to the establishment of a consultative body for the province's main minority groups and the return of the teaching faculty from Sombor to the town of Subotica. While most interlocutors said the situation had improved since 1992, they pointed out that there were still outstanding concerns. These included State interference in local government (most recently in Titel) and the need for greater personal autonomy in fields such as education and social affairs.

20. The Croats claimed that as a "new minority" they did not enjoy any internationally recognized rights. They also asserted that when the citizenship documents from the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (which gave "Croat" as the nationality) of some Croats had expired, they had been refused new citizenship documents for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

VIII. MONTENEGRO

21. In Montenegro the mission's discussions centred on the conflict in Kosovo, the constitutional position of the Republic of Montenegro and the problems of democracy-building in the Republic. The Montenegrin leadership underlined strongly that their Republic and people had no part in the conflict in Kosovo. They quoted a Montenegrin National Assembly resolution stating that neither Montenegrin territory nor Montenegrin conscripts should be used in the conflict. They also highlighted the difficult situation created by the flow of refugees (an estimated 20,000) from the conflict area to the Republic, and they called for an increase in international relief assistance. The President stressed that the full involvement of an international mediator, and in particular OSCE, would be crucial, especially to re-establish mutual trust.

22. On the future status of Kosovo, the President ruled out both the options of retaining the status quo or making insignificant changes on the one hand, and independence on the other. He also rejected the option of giving Kosovo the status of a third republic in the Federation. If the latter occurred, Montenegro would reconsider its own place within that body. He seemed to favour some sort of far-reaching autonomy for Kosovo within Serbia, although he recognized the Kosovar Albanian dislike of any connection with Serbia.

23. President Djukanović also set out Montenegro's current difficulties within the Federation, which he had discussed with Federal President Milosević in the course of two recent meetings. Montenegro insisted on the right to nominate the Federal Prime Minister (in place of Bulatović, who although a Montenegrin, was now Djukanović's main opponent); and to appoint half of the judges to the Federal Supreme and Constitutional courts; as well as to have equal rights with Serbia in the Central Bank.

24. The government representatives painted a positive picture of developments in the field of human rights, freedom of the media, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. Other representatives of human rights groups and the independent media gave a more critical assessment. Nevertheless, there was an impression that definite progress had been made, especially since the last presidential election. The mission was told that there was still room for improvement, especially in the attitude of magistrates, civil servants and the police. Both government and non-government representatives had high expectations of what could be achieved in this respect through continued cooperation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

IX. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THE MEDIA, AND JUDICIARY, LEGAL AND ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

25. The mission's findings on these issues are necessarily incomplete as it could not cover in depth the full range of questions in the time available.

A. The media

Summary. While the situation of the print media had improved and a network of independent radio and TV stations had been set up outside Belgrade, serious concern still remained in respect of the State media, the overall legislative framework governing the information sector and the Government's implementation of that legislation.

26. In the print media field, the mission noted that the number of independent publications had grown over the last two years. There is now a wide range of dailies as well as some weekly magazines, reflecting a diversity of opinion. These include a variety of publications, among them some dailies, in the Albanian language. But the mission was told that sales of newspapers were dropping and that the Yugoslav population looked mainly to the electronic media, in particular television, as its main source of information. It was also informed that the only factory producing roto-press paper in Serbia gave priority to pro-Government newspapers, which meant that many independent outlets had to import paper at higher prices.

27. In the electronic media field, the ANEM network of 33 independent local radio stations (including some stations run by municipalities in which the opposition had been victorious in the 1996 local elections) was established in 1997. The network is centred on Radio B 92 in Belgrade and covers some 60 per cent of the country. Opposition politicians said that this enabled them to gain access to the electronic media outside Belgrade. But serious problems with the legal framework governing the electronic media remain. Frequency allocation is in the hands of the Government; there is no independent regulatory council. The mission was told that the recent frequency competition (the first in five years, although it was said legislation prescribed annual competitions) was neither transparent nor strictly in accordance with the law. The Government had rejected the applications of a number of independent stations on technical grounds and had signed easily broken contracts, rather than issuing permits for the frequency licences. The media environment was governed by a series of laws and ministries at both the Federal and Republic levels, whose requirements and actions were often mutually contradictory. The Government had recently closed down independent stations (two of which were ANEM members) on the grounds that they were broadcasting without a licence, even though hundreds of others were doing likewise. These included the first attempt to establish a multi-ethnic radio station in Kosovo.

28. Concern was also expressed over the domination of the Serbian State television system, which constitutes the main source of information for the population as a whole. Its output totally supports the government line. It is the only TV network covering the whole of Serbia. Opposition leaders told the mission that they had no access to State TV and radio apart from the legally required appearances during election campaign. Independent analysis of its coverage of events during the 1997 elections showed a clear bias in favour of Government candidates. All independent media interlocutors said that Serbian State radio and TV and other pro-Government media were given preferential access to the Government's central information system, with independent outlets mainly being denied access to official press conferences, press releases, etc. This was denied by the Government.

B. Elections

Summary. There is still a lack of confidence in the electoral system in opposition and other non-governmental circles.

29. A number of interlocutors, and in particular those members of the opposition who had boycotted the 1997 Serbian Republic and presidential elections, expressed their lack of faith in the electoral system, which the OSCE observer mission saw as flawed in many respects. The critics focused in particular on the Government's decision fundamentally to change the number of constitutional units shortly before the elections without gaining the agreement of all the main political parties; the bias of the State media; and the election process in Kosovo. The mission was unable to examine the electoral system in detail. It will be necessary to follow up these concerns in advance of the next round of elections.

C. The legal process

Summary. There is a lack of confidence in non-official circles in the legal system.

30. A large majority of non-governmental interlocutors expressed a lack of confidence in the legal institutions and processes. The mission was told that all key positions in the main institutions, including the judiciary, were filled by Government supporters. This made it difficult to seek redress against the executive branch through the judicial system. On those occasions when verdicts against the Government were handed down, they were often not implemented by the State institutions, e.g. the court decision to overrule the expulsion of a Croat family from their house in the Radical Party-controlled municipality of Zemun; and the failure by the Government to return to Radio Pirot its equipment in accordance with a court order to that effect.

31. The Serbian Parliament in May 1998 adopted a law regulating the status of universities which reduced the status of all universities to economic enterprises. The post of Rector is identical to that of a company director. He and all the deans are appointed by the Government. Each university is run by a 15-member board, including 9 nominated (6 professors, 3 students) individuals from the university, and 6 political appointees. Heads of departments are appointed by the Dean, while other teaching staff are nominated by the Dean after consulting the Education Minister. Students are not allowed to form any political, religious or ethnic organizations at the university and are separated into three groups: those paid for from the budget; those partly financed from the budget; and those self-financed.

32. The Government justified the universities' loss of autonomy on the grounds that their financier (the State) had the right to administer them. It also claimed that the law gave the universities autonomy in respect of education and scientific and research work.

X. ATTITUDE TO THE PARTICIPATION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA IN OSCE

33. There was general support from both the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Serbian opposition for future participation by the Federal Republic in OSCE, but a widely diverging range of views on the conditionality which it needed to satisfy to secure full participation. The Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic expressed his Government's interest in full participation in OSCE at as early a date as possible. It was wrong that the Federal Republic was the only European country excluded. He claimed that it was already applying the organization's standards despite its non-participation. He insisted on the linkage he said had been established in the Milosević/Yeltsin agreement between the start of simultaneous talks on the return of the long-term missions and the simultaneous membership of the organization by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (the text actually speaks of readiness to start negotiations with OSCE simultaneously on receiving its mission to Kosovo and on the restoration of the membership of the Federal Republic in OSCE). He said that the Federal Republic did not maintain it was the sole successor State of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but it did claim to be the continuing State thereof, and indeed of Serbia and Montenegro as established by the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

34. The degree of conditionality for participation sought by interlocutors in Belgrade varied from those who thought immediate membership was necessary, to those who believed membership would play into the hands of the Government and therefore favoured greater conditionality, e.g. the return of the Gonzalez mission and a commitment to make progress on the issues it addressed.

35. For the Kosovar Albanians, this did not appear to be a major issue. But all who expressed a view on the subject linked significant progress on Kosovo, including in one case the complete solution of the Kosovo problem, to OSCE membership. Of those advocating independence, one at least would like to see an independent Kosovo in OSCE.

36. The President of Montenegro was against participation by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in OSCE unless it demonstrated a cooperative attitude, not only in words but also in deeds. He reminded the mission of the Federal Republic's conduct following the suspension of Kosovo-related sanctions in May.

XI. CONCLUSIONS

37. The perceptibly deteriorating situation in Kosovo, together with the relative lack of progress on issues identified by Mr. Gonzalez in his December 1996 report, underlined the need for a rapid re-establishment of the Long-term Missions to Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina and the return of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Federal Republic was only prepared to consider discussing the terms of the mandate of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office's Personal Representative, Mr. Gonzalez, once the question of its participation in OSCE had been settled. There seemed to be a general willingness on all sides within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that the country should participate in the work

of OSCE. But the degree of conditionality which it would have to satisfy to achieve this varied considerably.

38. The mission believed that its visit strongly underlined the need for the return of the Long-term Mission. Care would have to be taken that the work of the mission and other international efforts, such as the Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission, were not duplicated, and an assessment made, in the light of the situation at the time, of the extent to which the existing mandate was still valid. It could address issues such as the stimulation of dialogue between the two communities, serve as an ombudsman on human rights matters and provide some form of coordinating role for international activities in the area.

39. The lack of trust between the two communities in Kosovo, against the background of increasing violence, and the distance between the political positions as to how the conflict could be resolved, strongly reinforced the need for a committed high-level international involvement in the negotiation process.

40. The humanitarian situation needed to be observed carefully, as the supply of food to the population in winter could become very difficult, in particular if the situation in the province continued to deteriorate.

41. Although the scale of the problems of the Muslims in Sandjak was of a different magnitude from those of Kosovo, there was a case for a renewed presence of a long-term mission there.

42. The mission believed that the conditions in Vojvodina were such as to warrant coverage by the Long-term Mission.

43. A case can be made for the Long-term Mission to have its headquarters in Belgrade, with a sizeable presence in Kosovo and perhaps a branch office in the Sandjak.

Since the visit of Mr. Gonzalez in 1996, the situation regarding the media and the judiciary, legal and electoral systems did not appear to have improved significantly, apart from some progress in the field of print media. There was a continuing lack of confidence in non-official circles in the legal system, including the legislation relating to the election process. Developments in these fields needed to be monitored with a view to an ongoing dialogue with the authorities, including offering expertise on how progress could be made.

44. The Law on the University gave great cause for concern, as it provided for government control over the administration and teaching staff and limited the possibility of political expression by students. It fell short of relevant European standards.

45. While the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia indicated its readiness to accept the return of the Long-term Mission to Kosovo, it was only prepared to do so in return for the simultaneous participation of the Federal Republic in OSCE.

46. The mission recommends the continuation of talks between the Chairman-in-Office and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on issues of relevance to relations between OSCE and the Federal Republic.

Annex II

Letter dated 14 July 1998 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to inform you that the military authorities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have completed their assessment of possible support for a monitoring regime in connection with Security Council resolution 1160 (1998), as noted in my previous letter to you of 11 June 1998. Having considered a variety of options, the North Atlantic Council has decided at this stage to proceed with the SFOR option to step up its efforts, within its existing mission and capabilities, to monitor the Bosnian border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In this context I can confirm that the necessary arrangements have been put in place to forward any relevant information on suspected violations in the SFOR area of operations via the monthly report to the United Nations or on an ad hoc basis as necessary.

Should circumstances change I will write to you again. In the meantime allow me to take this opportunity to assure you of our continuing close cooperation.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

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PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 5 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

In reference to the statement by the President of the Security Council of 14 July 1998 (S/PRST/1998/22), I have the honour to forward herewith a note dated 5 August 1998 addressed to the Secretariat of the United Nations by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council and of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Dr. A. G. Ravan FARHÂDI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

98-22889 (E) 070898

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Annex

Letter dated 5 August 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan addressed to the Secretariat of the United Nations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations and has the honour to communicate the following.

The Taliban's latest assaults in north-western Afghanistan, carried out by the Pakistani military intelligence service and its paramilitary personnel, once again reveal the true nature of Pakistan's wicked intentions for regional hegemony. In this regard, the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/1998/22) issued on 14 July 1998, two days after the invasion of Maymana, the capital of north-western Faryab Province, by the Taliban, has been totally disregarded by the aggressors.

After the Pakistani nuclear explosions in May, only 20 kilometres from the southern Afghan province of Helmand, it became clear that Pakistan was and still is pursuing military adventures throughout the region. The instigation of instability created by the nuclear explosions brings to light a Pakistani aim to expand its politico-military influence in the region.

According to reliable intelligence reports by the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the Pakistani military institution and its military intelligence service have, for some time, been engaged in renewed efforts to recruit and train new personnel to be subsequently dispatched into Afghanistan. For the past few months, the heavy shipments of military supplies and logistics to the Taliban have also been apparent. Purchase of new heavy armament consignments from Ukrainian arms dealers airlifted through Sharja airport in the United Arab Emirates, alleged to have been shipped to Taliban headquarters in southern Afghanistan, has been confirmed by the media. As such, the number of Pakistani paramilitary personnel in Afghanistan has steadily increased.

In fact, observers have been convinced that the forcible relocation of all non-governmental organizations in Kabul, which caused many of these agencies to stall their operations in Afghanistan, was a result of the fact that some staff members had, on numerous occasions, seen foreign non-civilian citizens. This has also affected the status of foreign journalists, encouraged not to visit Taliban-held territories.

The planned objective behind the Pakistani actions has been its desire to install in Kabul, broadening its authority throughout Afghanistan, a subservient protectorate state, in the fancy of realizing the "strategic depth" for which it has prayed for so long. Pakistan, being placed under time pressure, is growing weary of the situation on its eastern border and finds its immediate task to be the subjugation of Afghanistan. In fact, the Pakistani Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan, confessed, in the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram, the Pakistani desire for attaining "strategic depth" in Afghanistan (see S/1998/630 of 10 July 1998).

The Islamic State of Afghanistan strongly believes in a peaceful solution to the Afghan problem. Its participation in the Islamabad preparatory meeting in April, laying the ground for the Ulema (religious scholars) Commission, supervised by the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, abruptly and unilaterally abandoned by the Taliban under the direct order of the Pakistani military intelligence service, is a manifestation of that fact. Despite numerous international appeals for the resumption of the talks, the Taliban showed no desire to continue face-to-face talks.

The Taliban intransigence, owing to their conviction in a military solution, is indicative of the Pakistani military determination to dominate Afghanistan. As such, any and all efforts culminating in a peaceful Afghan solution have been intentionally thwarted. It was not to anyone's surprise that the Taliban did not only reject attending the intra-Afghan grand meeting of 18 July 1998 in Bonn, Germany, striving to initiate what it hopes to be the traditional Grand Assembly, Loya Jirga, but, in fact, one week earlier, condemned the gathering. Subsequently, it launched major operations in north-western Afghanistan.

In the Taliban latest attacks and military rule in certain parts of north-western Afghanistan, large numbers of the civilian population - selected based on their ethnic background - have been forced out of their homes, airlifted and relocated in Kabul and Kandahar as hostages. Such heinous crimes against humanity presents a twofold reality: the Taliban do not and cannot trust the people; and the people in turn, are suspicious of the Taliban. Even in southern Afghanistan, where most of the population belongs to the Taliban's ethnic group, there is a great deal of resistance against their clique-imposed forced military conscription.

By using ethnic differences in Afghanistan, the Pakistani military intelligence service has made sure that one ethnic segment within the Afghan society can be used against another in a different part of the country, a phenomenon introduced in Afghanistan after the emergence of the Taliban.

Pakistan's intense diplomatic activities have been centred on covering its military operations in Afghanistan along with the Taliban. Unfortunately, numerous international circles, including the United Nations, have exhibited an unprecedented optimism about the Taliban's claim of a change of positions on numerous issues.

It has been hoped that accommodating the Taliban through appeasement would encourage them to resume peace talks and continue negotiations. Thus far, it has produced quite the opposite. Dismayingly, United Nations documents continue unjustly to equate all "sides" to the conflict, without drawing a distinction between aggressive elements versus those that just defend themselves, in the face of Pakistani expansionist designs, for the benefit of their national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Pakistani military intelligence service has used this appeasement policy as an opportunity to further its hegemonic ambitions. The Islamic State of Afghanistan regrets the lack of attention given to the depth of the disaster originating from the blatant interference and intervention by the Pakistani

military intelligence service in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. As a result of the international community's shallow posture, without due regard for who engages in acts of aggression and who engages in acts of defence, "both sides to the conflict" have been equally addressed. This puts equal blame on both sides, which is not fair at all. In essence, such an equation emboldens the aggressor.

While its military units are stationed at the gates of Kabul and can easily proceed into the city, the Islamic State of Afghanistan prefers a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Islamic State of Afghanistan is of the conviction that the attainment of a peaceful negotiated settlement will not jeopardize lives of innocent Afghans and will bring about future integration of all ethnic groups and the rule of law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, while expressing its deep regret in the face of renewed vast assaults by the Taliban, furthering the sufferings of the Afghan people and delaying an early return of peace to the country, still believes in a peaceful negotiated settlement of the Afghan problem.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan appeals to the United Nations and regional as well as other interested countries in the Afghan peace process to exert effective pressure on Pakistan to halt its aggressive adventurous policy towards Afghanistan. Pakistan must be inclined to join other neighbouring countries in their sincere and concerted endeavours to achieve a lasting and durable peace in Afghanistan.

Peace cannot be guaranteed in Afghanistan, even in the event that the Taliban mercenary group invades a greater part of our country. While resistance against the Taliban will continue unabated, only the peace process will suffer.